

# choice

the magazine of professional coaching

## HEALTH COACHING

Taking coaching into  
the healthcare arena

## WHEN THE WALLS COME TUMBLING DOWN

Breaking down barriers  
to communication

## THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

How coaching impacts  
all areas of life

## COACHING IN ALL PROFESSIONS

How coaching transforms  
the way we lead & work

# THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

How coaching impacts all areas of life

How are people outside of the coaching profession using coaching? When and how can they use coaching? How do we bring coaching skills into all areas of our lives? How do coaches use coaching in all areas of their lives? Who needs coaching as a skillset? Join us as we explore the butterfly effect of coaching, for coaches, non-coaches and in non-coaching situations.



# COACHING IS A WAY OF LIFE

The journey of a coach and her family

By Karine Guibert, MBA, ACC, CPCC



**B**eyond a profession, being a coach is a way of life. Any well-trained coach has done their own work, and any good professional continues to do so. By being engaged in a never-ending self-development journey, they become quicker to understand what is going on with them, and to activate their identified inner-resources to get back on balance when needed.

Not only does this self-awareness lead to being more real and more authentic, but it also allows them

to embrace their vulnerability and their emotions. And because they know and accept themselves better, they are less dependent on others' opinions and they know how to affirm their own choices.

To better understand how this takes place in a family, Sophia interviewed her husband and two teenage daughters. Here is what came out when she asked if and how her becoming a coach changed her.

"You dare more, you even put feathers in your hair, which you would have never done before!" is

what they said first, showing her increased self-confidence. "You express and support your opinions more easily and more often" they added, as an illustration of her new assertiveness. "You are more in touch with your world, you even put a *Do not Disturb* sign on your door sometimes" they concluded, identifying her newly assumed introvert boundaries.

## A WAY OF BEING

Besides a profession and a way of life, coaching is also a communication

style and a way of being. The coaching skill-set can be used in any role and by anyone willing to support others on their growth and development. Box of Crayons, a company created by author and coach Michael Bungay Stanier, defines coaching with this question: "Can you stay curious a little longer, can you rush to action and advice giving a little slower?"

Being more attuned to others' needs and making it about them is a coach's gift to their relationships, professional and personal.

tend to withdraw the minute they learn of the coach's profession. A corporate coach, who was also a trainer, started all her facilitations by asking the audience: who is impressed by me being a coach?

The second superpower would be about their own behavior, which would magically become beyond reproach. They would exhibit self control and rational emotions, have a clear path of life with no doubts, and avoid conflicts. As if they would become a saint, or worse, some kind of guru! Sometimes even coaches

at hand whenever needed. They do, however, at times cross the "no family, no friends" boundaries the coach may have talked about, and might confuse the coach with an advisor. For others, witnessing the self-development of their friend or family member can lead them to "want to have what [they're] having," like the stranger in the restaurant in *When Harry Met Sally*. And for those closest, the coach's journey can also be theirs and ask for adjustments.

Yet somehow, all of them become the best promoters for coaching.

In Sophia's family, her daughters mentioned with a smile, "We tried things that did not really work," referring to some communication techniques their coach-mother tried to introduce in the family. And all talked about how they were sometimes stressed out by the confidential aspect of Sophia's job, who works from home. Yet, her husband mentioned how he now regularly prescribes coaching at work, as "a solution to help unravel a blocked situation."

And when Sophia asked them what a coach was, it was with great pride that she heard them say: "It is somebody who listens and helps people find solutions, without giving their opinion, without judging them and by giving them tools and other perspectives." Pretty good, right?

### BOTTOM LINE

Consciously or not, coaches do use their skillset in other areas of their life beyond their work.

Whether it takes some adjustment or not, on the coach side and/or on their relationships', it is something to keep in mind. Our impact as coaches goes way beyond our job, and our journey might affect your relationships as well.

Some might call it an occupational hazard, but whatever the name, it is a new awareness to develop. •

By better respecting others' differences and by normalizing the human experience, a coach naturally becomes the understanding ear for anyone.

In Sophia's family, this is how they expressed it when interviewed. "You are better at deep talks," said her oldest teenager as a way to thank her for her better listening. "You know how to help me better," said her youngest, unconsciously recognizing the space her coach-mother made for her. "When we have a discussion, you always tell us: I hear what you're saying," was another answer, acknowledging with humor how they felt more heard.

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### THE COACH AS SUPERHERO

A coach can sometimes be seen as some kind of superhero. The first superpower would be the ability to read people and decrypt their most guarded secret at a glance.

Most coaches have usually experienced the feeling that people

feel like they have to get their act together, like one relationship coach who felt like a fraud each time he had an argument with his wife.

For Sophia's family, it is with a sense of relief that they actually appreciated the fact that she was not a coach 24/7. "Not every discussion is meant to be profound," they said thankfully. "You still laugh and you still yell," giggled her daughters. "You did not lose your spontaneity," added her husband. "And you still give your opinion and some advice," they appreciated.

Coaches are still regular people, and this is what actually gives them the ability to connect and empathize with their clients and with others. And coaches need coaches too!

### A JOURNEY FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Having a coach in your life can be a game-changer. For some, it can mean having an available resource